

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

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R 031106Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

USMISSION GENEVA

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SREF, CVIS

SUBJ: PROCESSING OF KURDISH REFUGEES AT FRANKFURT

REF:(A) FRANKFURT 3201,(B) TEHRAN 4095,(C)FRANKFURT 2618

1. EMBASSY CONCERNED AT FRANKFURT'S COMMENTS ABOUT ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGMENTS FOR FIRST GROUP OF KURDISH REFUGEES WHICH LEFT TEHRAN APRIL 25. WE HAD THOUGHT FROM REFTEL C THAT FRANKFURT WAS WELL AWARE OF LIMITATIONS ON OUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE COMPLETE DOCUMENTATION FOR REFUGEES. FURTHERMORE, REFTEL B EXPLAINED MYRIAD LAST MINUTE PROBLEMS WHICH PLAGUED EMBASSY AND UNHCR REP GOODYEAR EFFORTS TO EXPEDITE PROCESSING. WHEN HE AND EMBOFFS BOLSTER AND PATTERSON WENT TO AIRPORT LATE NIGHT OF APRIL 24 TO CHECK ON LAST MINUTE ARRANGEMENTS, THERE WAS NO ASSURANCE EVEN THEN THAT ALL MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS HAD BEEN COMPLETED. FURTHERMORE, ONE FAMILY OF SIX FAILED TO APPEAR DESPITE HAVING COMPLETED PROCESSING, AND ONE OR TWO OTHER HEADS OF FAMILY WERE REPORTED TO BE UNABLE TO GO FOR VARIOUS REASONS. AIRLINE RESERVATIONS WERE ALSO A PROBLEM. ICEM TRIED TO MAKE RESERVATIONS ON SAS BY SPECIFIC NAMES WHICH WAS NOT POSSIBLE IN VIEW UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHO WOULD BE READY TO GO. IRANAIR HAD NO RECORD OF 25 SPACES ALLEGEDLY RESERVED BY ICEM, AND GENERALLY FINDS IT DIFFICULT TO SAVE BLOCKS OF SEATS WHEN TRAFFIC LOAD IS HEAVY. FOR ALL OF THESE VARIOUS REASONS IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO SEND A GROUP OF 30 IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INITIAL GROUP, EVEN IF IRANAIR RESERVATIONS HAD COME THROUGH.

2. SECOND GROUP OF 26 REFUGEES LEFT MAY 1 AND AN ADDITIONAL 12 ARE EXPECTED TO DEPART MAY 4. UNHCR REP WILL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO SEND SMALL GROUPS UNTIL WE CAN ACCUMULATE BACKLOG OF REFUGEES WHO HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY PROCESSED. EFFORTS TO BUILD UP THIS BACKLOG ARE HAMPERED SO FAR BY GOI'S SLOWNESS IN NOTIFYING REFUGEES TO COME TO TEHRAN FROM WIDELY SCATTERED LOCATIONS, BY DELAY IN GOI ISSUANCE OF LAISSEZ-PASSERS, AND BY LACK OF SUFFICIENT ASSURANCES OF SPONSORSHIP WHICH MUST BE IN HAND BEFORE PROCESSING CAN BE COMPLETED. WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO BREAK THESE BOTTLENECKS AND WILL KEEP ADDRESSEES INFORMED OF PROGRESS, BUT IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE FIRM DEPARTURE SCHEDULES TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE.

3. COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES RAISED IN REFTEL A FOLLOW:

A. UNTIL A BACKLOG OF PROCESSED APPLICANTS IS BUILT UP IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH FIRM SCHEDULES FOR DEPARTURE TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE.

B. THERE IS NO EASY ANSWER TO NEED TO ESTABLISH CORRECT KURDISH NAMES. SOME PEOPLE USE FAMILY NAMES, OTHERS TRIBAL NAMES, AND OTHERS SIMPLY REFER TO THEMSELVES BY FIRST NAMES. DIFFICULTIES ARE COMPOUNDED BY TRANSLITERATION FROM KURDISH TO PERSIAN TO ENGLISH. WE ARE ALSO NOT SURPRISED THAT SOME APPLICANTS ARE UNABLE TO PROVIDE THEIR BIRTH DATES. BEING A NOMADIC PEOPLE THEY SET LITTLE STORE BY WRITTEN RECORDS AND ARE OFTEN UNABLE TO GIVE EVEN THE EXACT YEAR OF BIRTH. BY IRAQI PRACTICE, ANY ONE WHO DOES NOT KNOW HIS PRECISE BIRTH DATE USES JULY 1 OF THE APPROPRIATE YEAR.

C. IN IRAN IT IS NORMAL TO HAVE A RELIGIOUS MARRIAGE CEREMONY AND TO HAVE THE MARRIAGE REGISTERED AT AN APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT OFFICE. WE EXPECT THAT IN CASE OF KURDS LIVING IN REFUGEE CAMPS CIVIL REGISTRATION WAS PROBABLY NOT DONE.

D. WE ASSUME IRANIAN AUTHORITIES DID NOT FEEL IT WAS IMPORTANT TO ISSUE BIRTH CERTIFICATE FOR THE TWO MONTH OLD BABY BORN IN IRAN. IF FRANKFURT WILL FURNISH NAME OF BABY EMBASSY COULD ATTEMPT TO INQUIRE WHETHER BIRTH CERTIFICATE ACTUALLY ISSUED.

4. WE ARE AWARE OF ONLY ONE FEMALE VISA APPLICANT WHO WAS VISIBLY PREGNANT AND SHE SAID HER BABY WAS NOT DUE FOR THREE MONTHS. UNHCR HAS ALREADY ASKED GOODYEAR TO AVOID SENDING REFUGEES IN LAST STAGES OF PREGNANCY.

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5. FOR GENEVA: OF 186 ASSURANCE ALREADY RECEIVED, OVER HALF OF REFUGEES CONCERNED HAVE ALREADY DEPARTED OR ARE BEING PROCESSED. LACK OF ADDITIONAL ASSURANCES IN HOLDING UP INITIAL PROCESSING (INCLUDING REQUEST FOR LAISSEZ PASSERS) WHICH MUST BE ACCOMPLISHED BEFORE REFUGEES ARE ASSEMBLED IN TEHRAN. GOODYEAR HAS RAISED SAME QUESTION WITH UNHCR IN GENEVA. URGENT ACTION ON ASSURANCES IS NEEDED TO PERMIT US TO BUILD UP BACKLOG WHICH WILL PERMIT SMOOTHER FLOW OF REFUGEES TO FRANKFURT.

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